**Fr. Martin's Reflection – December 18, 2022**

**"Therefore, the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel."**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I truly hope and pray that you are having a wonderful Advent. With all the physical preparations that needed to be made I hope you had some time to spiritually prepare. At this late stage we may feel that we have missed this year, maybe better luck next year. Thank goodness,God doesn't work that way. Our God is not a seasonal God who appears twice a year. If we miss God at Christmas maybe I'll catch him at Easter; if we miss Easter, well, maybe Christmas, and on we go.

There were many reasons for the birth of Jesus, God becoming human, and one very important one was to show to us God's desire to be with us. To sit with us, to listen to us, to assure us, and to strengthen us in mind, body, and spirit. In this last week of Advent, treat yourself to some quiet time with Jesus. As Jesus said to his disciples, 'come away by yourselves' and sit for a while. Give yourself the opportunity to experience the healing love of Christ in the sacrament of reconciliation. Take a spiritual book and read it or reflect on the joyful mysteries of the rosary: The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Birth of Jesus, The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, The Finding of Jesus in the Temple. And before we end our prayer time with Jesus, invite Jesus into your heart with the following prayer:

**Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.**

God's love and blessings always,

*Fr. Martin*

♦ **A little reminder of our Christmas Carol Service this Sunday, December 18 @ 6pm, St. Mary Church, Bordentown.**

♦ **Christmas Confessions:**
   **St. Mary Church, Bordentown, Tuesday, December 20ᵗʰ @ 7pm-8pm**
   **Holy Assumption Church, Roebling, Wednesday, December 21ˢᵗ @ 7pm-8pm**